



## NCDOT Wants to Help You Save Time, Money Over Holidays



As families travel over the river and through the woods for celebrations, the N.C. Department of Transportation will suspend most road construction activities on major routes across the state to help make their trips a little smoother. By avoiding traffic delays, motorists can reach their destinations safely and efficiently, while cutting down on fuel consumption and costs. The list of closures will be available closer to the holidays on [our website](#). For real-time travel information at any time, visit the [Travel section](#) of the NCDOT website or follow NCDOT on [Twitter](#).

Here are some additional tips for navigating the highways safely during the holiday travel season:

- Leave early to get a head start on your drive. Travel at non-peak hours when possible.
- Stay alert. Even if work is suspended, you may encounter narrowed lanes and traffic shifts in work zones.
- Be patient and obey the posted speed limit.
- Use alternate routes, when possible, to avoid traffic congestion.
- Stay informed. Real-time travel information is available online and over the phone by dialing 511.
- Don't drive drowsy. Travel at times when you are normally awake, and take frequent breaks.
- Avoid distracted driving. When drivers stop

## Stay Connected



## N.C. Transportation Now

On the latest N.C. Transportation now, the department shares safety tips for drone use, DMV offices across the state get upgrades for next generation driver licenses, and NCDOT wants to hear what your favorite trails are around the state.



## 2015 Fall Wellness Fair A Success

focusing on the road ahead, they react more slowly to traffic conditions and are more likely to be involved in an accident.

### **Triad NCDOT Engineer Receives National Award of Excellence For Work Along Area Highways**



Roadside Environmental  
Engineer Ken Taffer  
Recognized Nationally

N.C. Department of  
Transportation

Secretary Nick Tennyson presented the National Roadside Vegetation Management Association's Turney Hernandez Award of Excellence to Triad's Roadside Environmental Engineer Ken Taffer at the Board of Transportation's December meeting in Raleigh.

Each year the NRVMA awards its highest honor to outstanding roadside vegetation management programs or individuals throughout the country. Taffer, one of only three people honored nationwide this year, was recognized for his dedication and success in continuing to promote the ideals of vegetation management.

"While the roadside unit has been my life's work for the last 32 years with NCDOT, there's no way I got to this point alone," says Taffer. "I have a stellar team with a high work ethic and they give their lives to serving the great state of North Carolina every day; I share the glory of this award with them," said Taffer.

"The efforts of every transportation supervisor, worker and contractor is an integral part of the local and central roadside environmental units; we are grateful for Taffer's leadership and every crew member that works daily to make the state of North Carolina shine," said Division 7 Engineer Mike Mills.

[NRVMA](#) is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to providing expertise, solutions and networking opportunities to personnel involved in integrated roadside vegetation management.

**Many Construction Dates Fast-  
tracked**

The Employee Wellness Fair was held last month at the National Guard Armory located off Franklin Boulevard in Greensboro; to educate employees about the importance of preventative health, safety, and physical and mental well being.

The Wellness Fair provides state employees an opportunity to check cholesterol levels and to learn ways of reducing their HDL and Tri-glycerides. Other screenings include glaucoma tests, stress and allergy tests, hearing test and spinal examinations.

This year about 200 employees, participated.



### **Donations Needed as Employees Adopt Families in Need For the Holiday**

"It's that time of year again to help a family in need and to show them that this is a season for giving," said

Governor Pat McCrory recently announced that many transportation projects across the state will see construction dates moved up thanks to the signed 2015 state budget.



Division 7 Board Member  
Cheryl McQueary

"The reforms I signed into law will get these roads built sooner," Governor McCrory said. "The primary purpose of the reforms was to ensure transportation funds were being spent on transportation projects and not diverted to other state programs."

The state budget included additional funding for transportation through the elimination of the transfer from the Highway Fund to the General Fund and through other fee and rate changes resulting in an additional \$1.6 billion over the next 10 years for transportation construction. The additional money allows NC Transportation add or accelerate a total of 248 construction projects across the state.

[Ninety-two new segments of highway projects](#) can now be funded through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the department's 10-year construction plan. Additionally, the construction schedules of another 90 highway projects already approved in the STIP are being accelerated. An additional 66 non-highway projects are also being added to or accelerated in the program.

Other Triad projects benefitting from the additional funding include the acceleration of the Greensboro Road widening/Jamestown Bypass in Guilford County by years and the funding of the [N.C. 119 Mebane Bypass](#) in Alamance County.

"N.C. 119 in Alamance County serves the dual functions of providing the primary regional north-south route between I-85 south of Mebane and US 58 in southern Virginia as well as providing north-south access to downtown Mebane," said Division 7 Board Member Cheryl McQueary.

"This project is needed to address travel demand, emergency vehicle response time, and the need for circumferential roads for people working outside of Mebane and Alamance County," said NCDOT Division 7 Engineer Mike Mills.

The NCDOT followed the Strategic Transportation Investments law to identify new projects (either segments

Division Engineer Mike Mills.

This year employees will be adopting two families.

One family consists of a mother and two children; an 11 year-old-girl and 9-year-old boy. The second family is a mother and three children, a 9-year-old girl whom has cerebral palsy, a 6-year-old girl, and 3-year-old boy.

Please join in and help these families to have a Holiday they will never forget. Gift tags have been placed on our Christmas tree in the lobby of our Division Office on Yanceyville Street.

Grab however many tags you would like, but remember that if you don't buy what was on your tag, place it back on the tree so someone else can. Your gifts will be delivered on December 18 so please turn in presents by December 16 so we can wrap them and have them ready for delivery.

Please allow us to wrap so that we can make sure we are giving to appropriate family. For questions or if you prefer to give a monetary donation and

or entire projects) at the statewide, regional and division levels. The projects were identified from those previously scored based on the same weights and criteria (data) used to develop the 2016-2025 STIP.

The schedule changes, called amendments, were presented to the Board of Transportation for their review at their December meeting, with their approval expected in January 2016.

For more information, please visit <http://ncdot.gov/strategictransportationinvestments/> or follow NCDOT on [Twitter](#).

### **NCDOT Awards Contract to Upgrade Signaling System Across 80 Miles of Roadway in Guilford County**



Signal Modernization Project  
Underway in High Point

The N.C. Department of Transportation has awarded a \$7 million contract to modernize functionality of the computerized signals around the City of High Point.

This project will improve traffic flow therefore improving emissions generated by traffic around the city.

"Our contractor will be upgrading signal cabinets, controllers, system detectors, expanding the CCTV monitoring network, upgrading central software, Ethernet and fiber optic cables; integrating them into a newer computerized system by which city employees can manage traffic cameras easier," said NCDOT Transportation Technician Gilbert Wagi.

"N.C. Transportation is constantly looking for ways to improve efficiency and reliability; by replacing these outdated signals across the entire City of High Point we will be part of the solution to these challenges," said Division 7 Board Member Cheryl McQueary.

"We've been meeting with city officials for about five years discussing ways to come up with a plan to change these aging signal cabinets which are more than 20 years old," added Division 7 Engineer Mike Mills.

have others shop for you, please contact organizer Heather Helms: (336) 487-0000.



### **Employee Awards Ceremony Held**

More than two-dozen employees were recognized last month for their dedication to the State as employees in Division 7. One employee in the group was given one of the highest service honors and a plaque presented by Division Engineer Mike Mills. Walter Douglas Bunton (pictured to the right in above photograph) was recognized amongst his peers for 40+ years of service to NCDOT. Bunton retired in August 2015.

Work is now underway and completion is anticipated for February 2019.

Haynes Electric Utility Corporation of Asheville is the contractor for the project whose bid came in at 20 percent below estimate.

This is one of seven road and bridge projects recently awarded by the Department of Transportation. The contracts were awarded to the lowest qualified bidder, as required by state law. They are worth \$42.6 million, which is \$7.3 million below NCDOT engineers' estimated cost.

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